



Conservation Practice Overview

September 2020

Irrigation Reservoir (Code 436)

An irrigation reservoir is a constructed dam, pit, or tank used to store water for irrigation.

Practice Information

Irrigation reservoirs are constructed in areas where seasonal water supplies are insufficient or unreliable to meet irrigation water requirements for part or all of the irrigation season. Irrigation reservoirs provide a reliable water supply that can improve water efficiency on irrigated lands. Reservoirs are also designed to control available irrigation flows, provide storage for spills, and tailwater recovery. Storing irrigation runoff can increase the retention time and breakdown of chemical contaminants.



Irrigation reservoir design should consider a suitable site location where foundation materials are adequate and impacts of failures are addressed. A suitable site should also account for the location of the available water supply such as streamflow, irrigation canals, drainage area, or a subsurface source. Address any impacts to other water users such as changes in instream flows, aquifers, sediment, erosion, contaminants, or water temperatures. Changes in these parameters especially changes in water temperatures could impact aquatic and wildlife communities. These should be considered and addressed.

The irrigation reservoir will require maintenance over the expected life of the practice and beyond.

Common Associated Practices

Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) Irrigation Reservoir (Code 436) is commonly applied with CPSs such as Pumping Plant (Code 533), Irrigation Pipeline (Code 430), Irrigation System, Microirrigation (Code 441), Sprinkler System (Code 442), Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface (Code 443), Irrigation Water Management (Code 449), and Structure for Water Control (Code 587).

For further information contact your local NRCS field office.